

**Statement on International Women's Day**  
*March 8, 2023*

International Women's Day honors a truth we live every day: that women and girls are essential to success and progress in every aspect of our society. Promoting opportunities for women and girls strengthens security, stability, and prosperity for everyone. And we know that we cannot solve any of the great global challenges of our time if half the population is left behind. So today, as we celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of women and girls around the world, we also reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that all people can reach their full potential.

Despite decades of progress, in far too many places around the world, the rights of women and girls are still under attack, holding back entire communities. We see it in Afghanistan, where the Taliban bars women and girls from attending school and pursuing employment. We see it in Iran, where the regime is brutally repressing the voices of women who are courageously standing up for their freedom. And in the face of Russia's vicious and unjust invasion of Ukraine, including the use of rape as a weapon of war, we see countless stories of women bravely fighting for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Ukrainians.

The United States stands with women and girls around the world in the critical work of protecting and advancing human rights. My administration is working with dedicated partners and local communities in every part of the world to expand economic security for women and girls, defend access to health care—including reproductive health care—safeguard women's political participation and human rights, and promote the full participation of women and girls in all facets of society. Through initiatives like the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment, we are supporting the infrastructure of the care economy in low- and middle-income countries. We have also redoubled our commitment to eliminating gender-based violence wherever it occurs, promoting accountability for conflict-related sexual violence, and expanding protection services for women and girls in humanitarian emergencies.

Here in the United States, we have made landmark investments to give families more breathing room and support women's participation in the labor force. This includes signing into law important workplace protections for pregnant and nursing workers in the United States. And last year, I was particularly proud to sign legislation strengthening and reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and increasing VAWA funding to \$700 million, the highest funding level in history. This critical legislation will advance access to services, justice, and healing for survivors.

As we continue working to implement our first-ever National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality, we are focused on lifting up the rights of women and girls through every aspect of both our foreign and domestic policy. This is a defining feature of who we are as a nation and the values we hold dear as Americans. So let us continue to strive toward a future where women have an equal seat at the table, an equal voice in shaping decisions, and an equal opportunity to contribute fully to their nations.

*Categories:* Statements by the President : International Women's Day.

*Subjects:* Afghanistan, human rights issues; Education access and affordability; Gender-based violence; Infrastructure development, international assistance for developing countries; Iran, human rights issues; National Strategy on Gender Equity; Reproductive health care; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; Women's Day, International; Women's rights and gender equality; Worker protections and labor standards.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD202300177.